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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 5 May 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 3: BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COUNCIL (continued) (E/1995/L.17)

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) said that, in submitting the draft decision contained in document E/1995/L.17, his delegation's sole purpose had been to clarify and complement the provisions of Council decision 1995/213 concerning the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development. For the sake of coherence, his delegation had proposed that the mandates of the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission for Social Development should be dealt with simultaneously in the debate on operational activities. While Canada was not inflexible on the subject, it was concerned about ensuring, inter alia, by means of paragraph (b) of the draft decision, that enough time would be devoted to consideration of the issue and that the Council would establish specifically when - in the general debate or in the debate on operational activities - and in what context it would be discussed. The Council could, for example, decide to set up a working group at the end of the debate on operational activities.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that after carefully considering the draft decision submitted by Canada, the Group of 77 and China had decided to express their agreement with the content of paragraph (a), but felt that paragraph (b) was unnecessary. In its decision 1995/214, the Council had merely decided to discuss the manner in which the discussion on the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development could be organized during the high-level meeting; that issue was already addressed in paragraph (a) of the draft decision. The mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission for Social Development, which were the focus of paragraph (b), would be discussed in the report of that Commission. The report, in turn, would be considered in an appropriate context - such as the general debate - during the substantive session of the Council. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, she proposed that paragraph (b) should be deleted.

The PRESIDENT said it was his understanding that the Group of 77 and China were not opposed to conducting an in-depth discussion on the follow-up to

the World Summit in the general debate of the substantive session, during which all of the countries could address the issues mentioned in paragraph (b) of the draft decision and arrive at a compromise, consensus or agreement on the subject.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines) said that the Group of 77 and China agreed with the President's interpretation.

Mr. CONTINI (France) said he agreed that the Council should consider the follow-up to the World Summit, especially at work-level meetings. He shared the opinion of the Group of 77 and China concerning paragraph (b) of the draft decision, and thought it should be deleted. With regard to paragraph (a), he proposed that the words "by the United Nations system" should be inserted after the words "preliminary exchange on the follow-up" and that the second part of that paragraph should be deleted.

The PRESIDENT said that the two paragraphs should be considered separately. With regard to paragraph (b), he proposed that the Council should decide to conduct an in-depth discussion, at its substantive session, on the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development; during that discussion, which should take place in the general debate, any country that so desired could request that the debate should focus on the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission for Social Development. The Council's decision would then reflect the consensus reached on the issue. If the Council concurred with that course of action, the President would ask the representative of Canada whether he would agree to delete paragraph (b) of the draft decision.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada), referring to the French proposal, indicated that the entire second part of paragraph (a) was taken from the corresponding passage in Council decision 1995/213 and that his delegation had merely added the phrase "covered by both the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development". As for paragraph (b), the Canadian delegation noted that a majority of the participants in the current meeting felt that the issue should be discussed in the general debate. However, he wished to know when it would be discussed, under what agenda item and in what manner, and in particular how much time would be devoted to it. If he received definite answers, he could agree to delete paragraph (b) of the draft decision.

The PRESIDENT said that the issue would be included among the social questions to be considered in the general debate from the afternoon meeting of 19 July to the morning meeting of 25 July.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines) said that the Group of 77 and China did not object to discussing the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development during the Council's general debate.

Ms. ESPINOSA (Mexico) said that it seemed obvious that the Council would consider the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the report of the Commission for Social Development at the same time, and that it would take decisions on both issues. The problem was whether the Council would have enough time.

The PRESIDENT said that it should be possible to ensure that the Council devoted enough time to the consideration of that agenda item.

Ms. JACOBSEN (Norway) said she shared the views of other delegations on the need to establish clearly whether the Council would have enough time to consider the issues under the agenda item in question. That item should be considered in tandem with item 6 (e), which concerned the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development and the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission on Population and Development. She asked the secretariat to organize the meetings so that the Council members could easily link their deliberations on item 5 (f) to those on item 6 (e).

The PRESIDENT took note of the linkage between the two items and said that it might be appropriate to establish a working group to consider them concurrently.

Mr. MAQUIEIRA (Chile), supporting the statement of the representative of Mexico, said that the discussion should not be confined to institutional issues. The Council had a specific mandate to consider the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission for Social Development, but it would also consider the report of the World Summit for Social Development and should therefore have enough time to examine the various components of the follow-up to the Summit as well.

Mr. RAMOUL (Algeria), supported by Mr. PEDROSO CUESTA (Cuba) and Mr. MONGBE (Benin), recalled that the Economic and Social Council was not the only forum in which those issues would be debated. Regardless of the context in which the Council considered the issues at its substantive session, the General

Assembly, and particularly its Second and Third Committees, was the most appropriate setting in which to reflect further on those issues, and would have all the time needed for that purpose. Moreover, unlike the Council, which had only 54 members, the General Assembly was a forum in which all the Member States would have a chance to air their views.

Mr. SINGH (India) said he shared the opinions of the representatives of Mexico and Norway, and suggested that the general debate should be organized so that the meetings devoted to consideration of the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission on Population and Development were scheduled at the end of the debate on economic questions, and the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission for Social Development were considered at the beginning of the debate on social questions. With regard to the President's idea of forming a working group, he recalled that during the debate on coordination issues, the Council would consider a proposed common framework for following up international conferences. It appeared, therefore, that the current meeting was not the proper forum in which to debate the issue.

The PRESIDENT said that he had merely said that it might be necessary to establish a working group. He had never suggested that that should be done at the current meeting. It would be for the Council, at its substantive session, to take such a decision, if it deemed it necessary. He noted, furthermore, that the members present seemed to share the concerns of the Canadian delegation regarding the need to take up the matter at the substantive session and to have sufficient time for that purpose.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) said that assurances had been given that the questions raised by his delegation would indeed be taken up at the substantive session and that the Council would devote sufficient time to them. He supported the proposals by Norway and India that items 5 (f) and 6 (e) should be taken up consecutively. It seemed a good idea to establish a working group but he agreed that it was premature, at the current stage, to take such a decision.

The PRESIDENT said that it seemed that Canada agreed that paragraph (b) of the draft decision should be deleted.

Paragraph (b) of draft decision E/1995/L.17 was deleted.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines) said that the second part of paragraph (a) of draft decision E/1995/L.17 was in fact taken from Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/213, which had been concerned only with the follow-up to the

International Conference on Population and Development. The question now was whether to take a separate decision on the consideration of the issues which had been covered by both the International Conference on Population and Development and the World Summit for Social Development. However, those issues could be taken up during the general debate, along with the aspects appearing in paragraph (b) which had just been deleted. She therefore agreed that the second part of paragraph (a) was unnecessary and should be withdrawn.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) said that the purpose of the second part of paragraph (a) was merely to draw a parallel, with a view to the way in which statements could be prepared, between the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development and that of the World Summit for Social Development. The first part of paragraph (a) corresponded to his delegation's main concern, which was that the World Summit for Social Development should be one of the principal themes of the high-level meeting. His delegation therefore supported the view that the second part of paragraph (a) was not essential and would have no objection to withdrawing it.

The second part of paragraph (a) of draft decision E/1995/L.17 was withdrawn.

Draft decision E/1995/L.17, as orally amended, was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 9: JOINT AND COSPONSORED PROGRAMME ON HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS/ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME (continued)

Draft decision E/1995/L.16

Mr. BUTLER (Australia) said that, following the consultations he had had on the previous day and so as to better reflect the decision which the Council had indicated it was prepared to take, he proposed that draft decision E/1995/L.16 should be revised by adding the following paragraphs:

"The Council further decides to continue informal consultations on the questions of:

(a) Representation on the Programme Coordinating Board of the six co-sponsoring organizations and non-governmental organizations;

(b) The question in which body or bodies elections subsequent to the first election, which will be conducted in the Economic and Social Council, will be conducted.

This decision should be read in conjunction with the statement reporting on consultations coordinated by the Permanent Representative of

Australia, Mr. Butler, on 4 May 1995 [document ...] and statements made by other representatives on the same occasion and at the time of the adoption of this decision."

He stressed that the statement which he had made on the previous day, in which he had referred to the statements made by other representatives which would appear in the relevant summary records, would be published as a Council document and that its contents were an integral part, at the same level as draft decision E/1995/L.16 as revised, of the decision which the Council must take at the current stage of consideration of the question.

Mr. MONGBE (Benin) said that he supported the revision proposed by the representative of Australia. He noted, however, that Africa, the continent with the largest number of States, would have more or less the same number of seats on the Programme Coordinating Board as other continents with fewer States. He understood that the negotiations on the draft decision had been laborious and that it had only been possible to reach a very weak compromise. His delegation joined the consensus, but wished to state for the record that it regarded the draft decision as an exceptional case which could not serve as a precedent.

Mr. PEDROSO CUESTA (Cuba) said that he agreed with the representative of Benin that Africa was underrepresented on the Programme Coordinating Board and that the decision taken should in no way establish a precedent.

Mr. KEITA (Mali) said that he agreed with what had just been said by the representatives of Benin and Cuba about the composition of the Programme Coordinating Board. He also noted that there was an error in the French version of the draft decision: subparagraph (c) of the first paragraph, should read: "three seats for Latin American and Caribbean States", not "five seats".

Draft decision E/1995/L.16, as orally revised, was adopted.

The PRESIDENT said that the resumed organizational session would clearly need to meet again in order to consider the measures to be taken as a result of the decision just adopted and other questions which it had not been possible to take up at the current meeting.

Mr. RAMOUL (Observer for Algeria) said that his delegation understood that the joint and co-sponsored programme on HIV/AIDS needed to be implemented as soon as possible. However, it shared the concern of the Group of 77 about the trend to multiple resumptions of the organizational session of the Council. He believed that all the texts governing the work of the Council should be

respected and that the Council should avoid giving opportunities to any delegations which so wished to request meetings on matters of concern to them, since that could only lead to a proliferation of meetings and a relaxation of the discipline which the Council was supposed to maintain.

The PRESIDENT said that a further resumption of the organizational session was justified for technical reasons. The Council was an organ established by the Charter which could meet when it wished, on condition that all its members were in agreement. It was a sovereign body, and it should not restrict its own sovereignty guaranteed to it under the Charter.

He took it that the Council agreed to resume its organizational session on Thursday, 1 June 1995.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take up the question of Brazil's proposal that the Council, at its resumed organizational session, should consider the draft decision of the Commission on Sustainable Development concerning the establishment of an intergovernmental panel on forests.

He took it that the Council wished to take up the proposal at the next meeting of the resumed organizational session.

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 12.50 p.m. and resumed at 1.06 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (continued) (E/1995/58)

The PRESIDENT recalled that at its 7th meeting, at the request of the representative of Egypt, the Council had agreed to include in the agenda of its resumed organizational session for 1995 a new item entitled "Tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year and World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond". He suggested that the Council should take up that matter.

Mr. SUTOYO (Indonesia), speaking as the Chairman of the Commission for Social Development, said that he had found some factual inconsistencies in the text of the annex to the letter dated 3 February 1995 which he had sent to the President of the Council (E/1995/58). The report of the Commission for Social Development would contain an exact description of the facts concerning the question under consideration and it would then be possible for the Council to take a decision on that basis. He therefore wished to withdraw document

E/1995/58 and hoped to be able to submit the report in question to the Council shortly.

Document E/1995/58 was withdrawn.

The resumed organizational session for 1995 was suspended until 1 June 1995.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.